

Bald Knob Wilderness Quest

Quest Description:

Welcome to the Bald Knob Wilderness Quest! Bald Knob Wilderness was designated as a wilderness area by the Illinois Wilderness Act of 1990 and totals 5,786 acres. Located in Union County, and adjacent to Clear Springs Wilderness, the area has generally rugged topography including narrow ridge tops, steep slopes and narrow creek bottoms.

Bald Knob Wilderness reflects the story of the historical land use in the area – of past cultures and the evidence of their settlements that remain. Old homesteads, fruit trees, abandoned roads and cemeteries can be found throughout this area showing evidence of how past inhabitants used these lands. The following excerpts from Edith Rendleman's memoir entitled *All Anybody Ever Wanted of Me Was to Work* (SIU Press, 1996), gives a good idea of what life was like near the turn of the century in the Bald Knob area:

....we lived in a three room log house. It consisted of one large living room and bedroom combined and a kitchen downstairs and one room upstairs over the living room. There were only two small windows, one on each side of the house...

When we lived there, there was a cistern out from the kitchen door on the right. We used water out of it to drink, cook, wash, etc. There was also a well in the backyard, down the hill, under the apple trees. We drew water out of the well by the bucket for the stock. Near it Mom had a milk trough eight feet long by twelve inches wide, sunk in the ground. It had a lid on hinges. She kept her milk, and butter and anything else she didn't want to spoil in this trough. Somebody had to draw fresh water from this well and change the water three times a day.

Historic sites like this are "touchstones" to our past. Step back in time and imagine a day in the life of this homesteader. Sketch what you think this homestead might have looked like in the 1800's.

Please leave any items as you find them. It is illegal to disturb, alter, remove or damage Forest Service sites and historic objects.

Trail Name and Marker: Godwin Trailhead (east) - Ranbarger Trail (#204) to Lost Trail.

Trail Difficulty: Moderate to Difficult

Trail Length: ½ mile

Travel Time: 1 hour (round trip)

Trail Type: Dirt/gravel

Best Season: Winter, spring and fall

Possible Hazards: Loose rocks, roots, poison ivy, poisonous snakes, rusted and sharp materials, holes, and steep hills.

Wilderness Ethics: Plan ahead and prepare for your trip, Leave what you find, Pack in/pack out, Travel on durable surfaces, Respect wildlife and other visitors.

Directions to trail head:

From Alto Pass/Rt. 127: Take Bald Knob Road west 0.7 miles, to road junction. Veer left towards Bald Knob Cross. Travel about 2 miles to Godwin Trailhead on the right side of road.

For More information:
Mississippi Bluffs Ranger District
521 North Main
Jonesboro, IL 62952
(618) 833-8576
www.fs.usda.gov/shawnee

Supplies Needed:

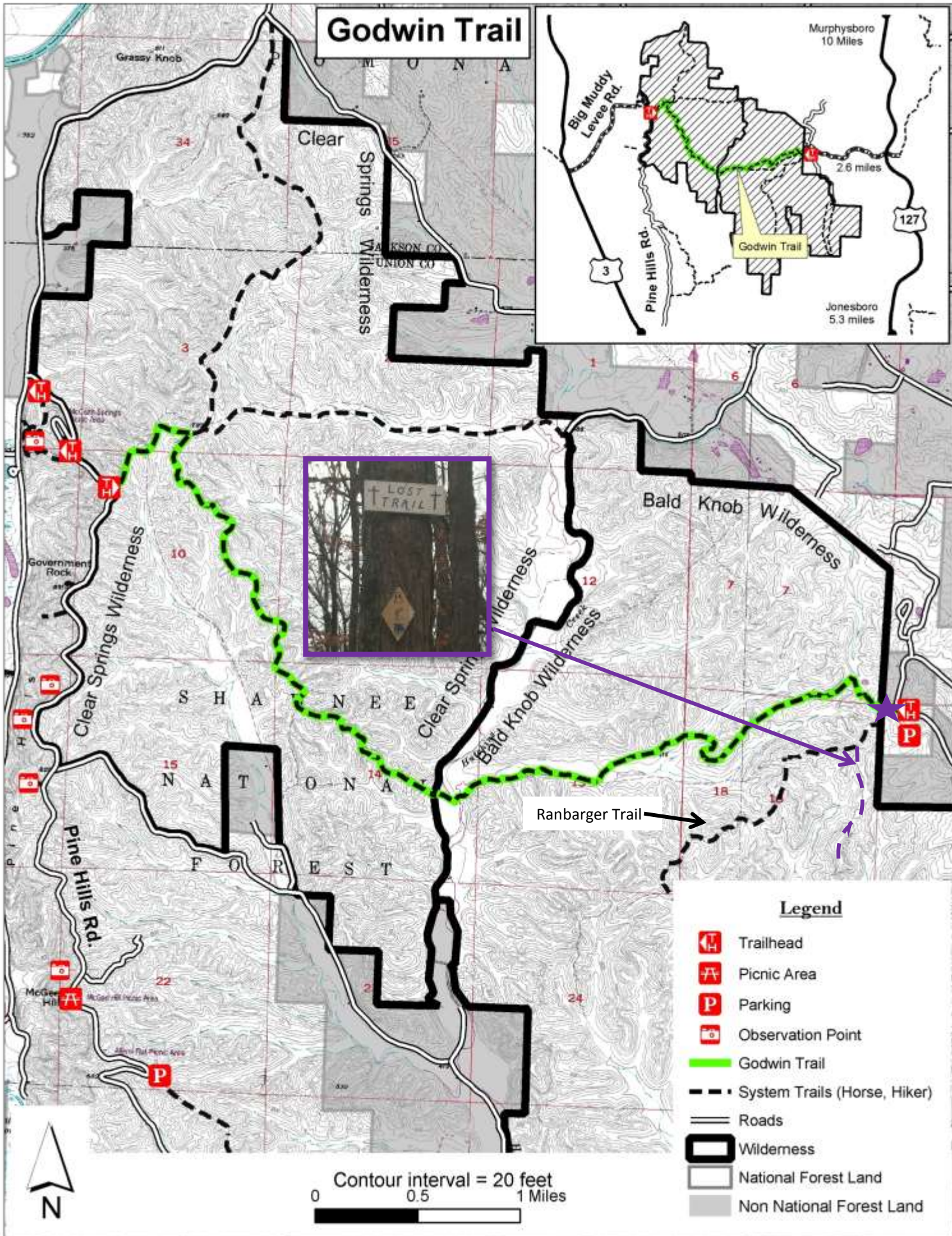
1. Map
2. Water
3. Snack
4. Pencil
5. Notebook

In Case of Emergency: 911
Union County Hospital
517 N Main St.
Anna, IL 62906
(618) 833-4511



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Godwin Trail



Legend

- Trailhead
- Picnic Area
- Parking
- Observation Point
- Godwin Trail
- System Trails (Horse, Hiker)
- Roads
- Wilderness
- National Forest Land
- Non National Forest Land